

Masters of Education in Educational Technology Leadership

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### **Introduction and Career and Leadership Goals**

While I didn't always work in education, I have always been a teacher! It started out with accounting software, then phone system, pharmacy, you name it. If it was software related, I got called to help! And I've always loved that feeling when the person you're helping "gets it"! The educational technology leadership program fits perfectly with what I have done and where I want to go. Part of what I realized when I changed careers was that the education field not only supports and encourages further education, it also requires it from the standpoint that you cannot keep up with current trends and the most productive methods of educating others without continuous learning.

I always thought I was keeping up with professional development and continued learning but this master's degree course has provided so much more technology tools than I was already aware of. I've even discovered that I have an interest in the research and writing part that, at first, I didn't like at all.

During the last six months of this program I have already advanced my career and goals by creating a new company and beginning a textbook venture with several teachers. I've received two job offers pertaining to distance education and have accepted one in an on-line learning environment to guide students through similar learning experiences as I have had. I plan to continue participating in innovative methods of education and learning and pursue a doctorate in education with the intent of working for a university. As far as leadership goals, I want to be an example of tech savvy, be helpful to others who are just entering the technology universe, and encourage new learners to try new things and discover the benefits of what is available on the Internet. I hope to provide comfortable assistance to others to help them tighten the gap between the students and their own technology abilities!

### **My Vision of Educational Technology**

Just like the end of a rainbow, you can never really find the end of technology. It is said that microcomputers only last five to seven years (Michael, 1998). With that thought in mind, we must continue to look for better ways to provide technology to our students.

My vision of educational technology includes utilizing online technology tools such as learning management systems (LMS) and cloud storage options with access from anywhere with Internet. According to a poll by techLEARNING.com respondents expect schools as physical locations to become less important and they also expect learning to become more collaborative (Solomon, G., & Schrum, L., 2007). Also, the cost benefits of utilizing freeware options are certain to gain attention from government agencies given our never-ending financial awareness. And schools can only benefit from a wise use of funding.

Teachers should also be more empowered to use technology. While it is well known that all teachers are to be integrating technology into their classrooms, it is also well known that many still don't. Issues such as not enough time and support from technology staff, and online tools that are blocked at the school continue to be roadblocks for many. We must make the use of technology more convenient for educators if we wish to keep up with the rest of the world. Our future depends on our ability to compete with other countries.

The Internet basically began so that research could be shared by educational facilities. Educators should keep that vision in mind and teach students to work collaboratively to obtain their goals. Which also means that teachers should be doing the same.

And one of the main justifications for the visions I have for a more encompassing use of technology is the fact that it is just more fun and memorable for the students and the teachers!

### **What Have I Learned About Myself**

As a result of this course I have learned that I really enjoy learning new things. Having the chance to try out new technology and then use it in my classroom has given me an advantage over other teachers who must try things out on their own. Working on projects for the masters course work gives me support from peers, coaches and professors unlike an on your own environment.

With regards to technology and leadership skills, I seem to be very good at learning to use software quickly. I feel it has a lot to do with having an idea of what you should be able to do and not being afraid to try things out. I have enjoyed the group projects and personally prefer it when we are able to choose our own partners. I don't work well in a situation when groups have members who are last minute people and tend to do the work for them if I find myself in that situation.

Another thing that I have been reminded of is the fact that everyone is not as excited as I am about new software and technology tools. When working with other teachers or sharing information I have to watch for that "deer in the headlights" reminder that I'm going over board. I want my excitement to be an encouragement and not an obsession!

### **The Top Six**

Selecting the six courses that I felt helped me the most is an extremely difficult question to answer! You would think this would be easy but I feel that all of the coursework has been very useful. For me to answer this question I actually worked backwards and considered the courses I felt I could rule out, if I had to.

Based on the fact that I can rely on others in my district with more in depth knowledge regarding curriculum and information management systems, I chose to take out the Curriculum

and Information Management courses. (However, I really enjoyed the curriculum aspect and the reading material from the Information Management course was very educational regarding research findings about student Internet use!)

Reluctantly, my third and fourth choices to remove were Digital Graphics and Desktop Publishing and Web Design. These were two of my favorite courses but, in my case, I am already so familiar with these topics I decided to choose them.

With all of that stated my choice of the six courses that helped me more than others include:

- EDLD 5301, Research; because the introduction to the formalities of producing papers and APA formats was crucial. More detail in the area of APA formats can be beneficial, in my opinion.
- EDLD 5306, Concepts of Educational Technology; as an orientation to what to expect and what will be expected throughout the program. I expect the future 5306 course material to be even more of a benefit after having completed a full cycle of students.
- EDLD 5333, Leadership; gave insights into the decision making process and the use of data. These are topics that must be considered when developing lessons and making sure everyone in the school is heading toward the same goals. The reading material assigned in this section was extensive but very useful regarding leadership topics.
- EDLD 5344, School Law; because of the serious nature of the content and the impact that the FERPA has on educational facilities.

- EDLD 5363, Video Technology and Multimedia; provided opportunities to use conferencing and multimedia options that will be required in everyday responsibilities as technologists. The ability to help teachers use these tools is also necessary in any technology education role today.
- EDLD 5364, Teaching with Technology; allowed students to create a group project that imitated an actual classroom in which we help a teacher to create a lesson using technology. This real life task helps to prepare technologists for what lies ahead of them.

### **Degree Program Reflections**

This degree program has provided a steady stream of positive challenges. The program has kept me immersed in current technology trends and reminded me of the value of lifetime learning. The work has been informative and enjoyable even though it was time consuming. The information I have learned has definitely been worth the time and the money!

I feel that one of the programs strengths has been the time that is available to students based on their own needs. If I wanted to investigate a topic further, I could at my own pace. Unlike professional development programs when there is only so much time available, I can spend as much time as I need trying out presented technology. Another strength of the program has been the constant contact and support available. Coach, professors, and peers have all been accessible for questions, brainstorming, and support. The course has been a prime example of how K-12 teachers should strive to teach their students.

### **Three-Year Professional Development Plan**

My three-year professional development plan may be found in Table 1.

**Curriculum Vitae**

My curriculum vitae may be found in Figures 1 and 2.

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=62GNjya0EcA&feature=channel>

Table 1

<b><i>Three-Year Professional Development Plan</i></b>	
<b>2009 - 2010</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up a business to provide workshop training for education facilities.</li><li>• Attend advanced Moodle training and continue to create Moodle learning environments.</li><li>• Obtain TEA approval for CPE credit.</li></ul>	
<b>2010 - 2011</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present Moodle training for education facilities.</li><li>• Publish my first instruction manual.</li><li>• Possibly participate in an online doctorate program.</li></ul>	
<b>2011 - 2012</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilitate online learning communities.</li><li>• Become a college or university professor.</li><li>• Become a certified presenter.</li></ul>	

Figure 1

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ELLEN L. ZIMMERMAN, MTT</b>  <b>2672 WESTBURY</b>  <b>BEAUMONT, TX 77713</b>  <b>409 752-5313</b>  <a href="mailto:jemwz@aol.com">jemwz@aol.com</a> or <a href="mailto:ezimmerman.us@gmail.com">ezimmerman.us@gmail.com</a></p>		
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<b>EDUCATION</b>	Lamar University M. Ed., Educational Technology Leadership (coursework complete)	<i>Beaumont, Texas</i> Diploma August 2010
	Lamar University Bachelor of Business Administration, Accounting	<i>Beaumont, Texas</i> August 1993
<b>TEACHING</b>		
Academic Coach	<b>Higher Education Holdings</b> Facilitating online course management Bachelor and Masters degree programs for various colleges and universities.	<i>Dallas, Texas</i> June 2010 to present
Master Technology Teacher	<b>Hardin-Jefferson High School</b> Teaching students to utilize current technology practices in everyday learning. Course subjects include BCIS I, BIMM, and Video Technology classes.	<i>Sour Lake, Texas</i> August 2008 to present
Master Technology Teacher	<b>West Hardin High School</b> Teaching students to utilize current technology practices in everyday learning. Course subjects included BCIS I, BCIS II, BIMM, Desktop Publishing, and Web Mastering classes. Assisted with the school Web page.	<i>Saratoga, Texas</i> February 2005 to August 2008
Summer School Teacher	Monitored and assisted students using various resources on computer and with work books for core subjects and electives.	Summer of 2008, 2007 and 2006
Summer School Teacher	Monitored and assisted students in a variety of subjects utilizing the NovaNet course management system.	Summer of 2005
High School Math Teacher	Employed mid-year to teach Algebra, Geometry and Math Models.	February 2005 to June 2005
Substitute Teacher	<b>Hardin-Jefferson High School</b>	<i>Sour Lake, Texas</i> December 2004 to February 2005

Figure 2

**OTHER PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCE**

Human Resources Director	HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital/CMS	July 1994 to April 2004
Accounting Manager	Continental Medical Systems	June 1992 to July 1994
Accountant/Office Manager	Efficient Systems, Inc.	April 1990 to June 1992
Human Resources Director	Fiserv, Inc.	June 1986 to April 1990

**CREDENTIALS**

Certifications	Texas Education Agency approved CPE Provider Master Technology Teacher (MTT) Technology Applications EC-12 Secondary Business Composite 6-12 IC3 Certification Advanced Technical Credit for Business and Technology Courses	April 2010 October 2007 October 2006 December 2004 December 2004 Current for 2009-2010
Committees	TEA Standards Setting Committee Member for the Master Technology Teacher Exam	November 2009
Presentations	Internet and Cell Phone Safety Texas Computer Education Association Presenter Texas Computer Education Association Presenter	April 2010 February 2009 February 2008
Honors and Awards	Mirabeau B. Lamar Award of Excellence Award	2008

**SPECIALTIES**

Training	I love teaching others how to use software and technology. I also create step-by-step and video tutorials on a variety of topics.	
Presentations	Have developed training presentations on various subjects by request and just as a hobby. Feedback comments often include "easy to understand".	
Software	Self taught on numerous softwares including several Website design and learning management systems. Previous experience with a wide variety of software packages and technology tools, Windows and Mac. Extensive use of innovative Web 2.0 tools.	